

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1.-46. (Canceled)

47. (Currently Amended) A method for feeding electronic components to be mounted onto a board, comprising:

from a component feed tray in which electronic components are arranged, which component feed tray is supported at a tray placement position so as to be vertically displaceable with respect to a surface on which the component feed tray is supported, and which electronic components are disposed on the component feed tray so as to be displaceable relative to the component feed tray upon leap-up of the component feed tray, picking up one of said electronic components by using component holding and suction pressure of a component suction and holding member such that said one of said electronic components is sucked and held by said component suction and holding member,

wherein said component holding and suction pressure is not lower than a suction pressure capable of sucking and holding said one of said electronic components, and is lower than a suction pressure capable of sucking and holding said component feed tray.

48. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 47, wherein picking up said one of said electronic components by using said component holding and suction pressure of said component suction and holding member, such that said one of said electronic components is sucked and held by said component suction and holding member, comprises

(i) bringing said component suction and holding member into contact with said one of said electronic components by lowering said component suction and holding member after aligning said component feed tray with said component suction and holding member,

(ii) creating suction pressure of said component suction and holding member

such that the suction pressure reaches said component holding and suction pressure when said component suction and holding member starts ascending after being brought into contact with said one of said electronic components, and

(iii) sucking and holding said one of said electronic components with ascent of said component suction and holding member.

49. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 48, further comprising: determining a time for creating the suction pressure in consideration of an amount of time necessary for the suction pressure to reach said component holding and suction pressure from when the suction pressure is created by said component suction and holding member.

50. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 48, wherein creating the suction pressure of said component suction and holding member comprises creating the suction pressure of said component suction and holding member after said component suction and holding member is brought into contact with said one of said electronic components.

51. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 48, further comprising: determining a time for lowering said component suction and holding member according to a size or a weight of said one of said electronic components so as to prevent said one of said electronic components from leaping up from said component feed tray due to said component suction and holding member being brought into contact with said one of said electronic components.

52. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 47, wherein said component holding and suction pressure is a suction pressure determined according to a size or a weight of said one of said electronic components.

53. (New) The method according to claim 47, wherein said component holding and suction pressure is a pressure determined to be lower than a suction pressure capable of sucking and holding the weight of said component feed tray.